



The Visual Made Verbal: A Comprehensive Training Manual and Guide to the History and Applications of Audio Description

Joel Snyder Phd

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Verbal descriptions of life have been around for centuries, but the digital age has made access to those descriptions even more important. Dr. Joel Snyder, an audio description pioneer, has created a book and website offering the first overview of the field, including its history, application to a range of genres, description of training techniques and list of resources.

Audio description brings the visual world to life, making theater productions, television shows, films, visual art and events accessible to people who are blind or have low vision. Describers employ succinct, vivid, imaginative words to convey visual images those with sight take for granted. Although countries worldwide have taken up the cause, the United States has fallen short on research and institutions to study the field. Dr. Snyder's book helps fill in some of those gaps.

"For decades, Joel Snyder has combined his astonishing command of language with his keen attention to detail to create word pictures that stir the mind's eye, especially for patrons of the arts whose physical eyes cannot see. ... His book has been long-awaited and no doubt will become the standard for prospective audio describers around the world."

-- Kelsey Marshall, founding director of accessibility, John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C.

Dr. Joel Snyder is known internationally as one of the world's first "audio describers," a pioneer in the field of audio description: making theater events, museum exhibitions, and media accessible to people who are blind or have low vision. Since 1981, he has introduced audio description techniques in 36 states and D.C. and in 35 countries; he holds a Ph.D. in accessibility-audio description from the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona.

Dr. Snyder's company, Audio Description Associates, LLC (www.audiodescribe.com) uses audio description to enhance a wide range of arts projects including video and film, museum exhibitions and live events, As Director of Described Media for the National Captioning Institute, he supervised the production of description for Sesame Street and dozens of feature films and nationally broadcast television; his descriptions can be heard at Smithsonian Institution exhibits, the Getty Museum, the Albright-Knox Gallery and throughout the country at National Park Service visitor centers. As Director of the American Council of the Blind's Audio Description Project (www.acb.org/adp), Dr. Snyder voiced description for network coverage of President Obama's inauguration in 2009 and 2013 and recently produced the first-ever audio described tour of The White House; the ADP website is the nation's principal provider of information and resources on audio description.

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